

VARIABLE LENGTH INTER-PACKET GAP

ABSTRACT

A method and apparatus are provided for determining a suitable inter-packet gap (IPG), or a suitable extension to be added to a default IPG as a packet is processed. The apparatus includes an adder to add an incremental measure of a packet to an existing measure and produce a new measure (e.g., in bytes). The apparatus further includes a comparator which, if the new measure exceeds a programmable threshold (e.g., a stretch ratio), issues a signal to increase the IPG and decreases the new measure by the threshold. The current measure is then stored (e.g., in a register) for addition to the next incremental measure. A counter tracks the number of signals received before the end of the packet, at which time the total is forwarded to a component configured to insert or apply the IPG and the counter is reset for the next packet.